

NDSA CONTENT WORKING GROUP MEMBER PRESENTATION

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The University of Louisville's national profile is growing, with a big year in sports achievement as well as big strides toward the goal of becoming a "premier nationally recognized metropolitan research institution," including improvements in 4-year graduation rates, facilities, community engagement, and student achievements such as 75 Fulbright scholarships in the past 10 years.

The university dates back to the founding of Jefferson Seminary in 1798. It joined the state higher education system in 1970. Being a public institution in a poor state, though, means that every achievement is hard won. Funding and staffing are always in short supply.

The University of Louisville Libraries was admitted to the Association of Research Libraries in 2002. Our Digital Initiatives department (now fully staffed at 2 FTEs) was established in 2006, when I was hired. My background and passion is in working with cultural heritage collections, so I was drawn to the Louisville position both for the richness of their collections and their administrative structure, placing digital initiatives with the archivists rather than with IT. (It also explains my interest in the Content Working Group.)

At UofL, digital initiatives primarily means digital collections – 38 of them, with over 60,000 items, and ever-growing – in a CONTENTdm platform (<http://digital.library.louisville.edu>). This includes rare and unique content from every library in the UofL system and other campus partners. Most of the content is digitized, mostly in-house by student employees; several collections are born-digital, in whole or in part, with inevitably with more to come. Other than the inclusion of ETDs in Digital Collections, we really do not have an institutional repository yet.

One of the benefits of joining ARL was the chance to work with forward-thinking peers, such as when we joined a group of southeastern research libraries seeking NDIIPP funding to experiment with adapting LOCKSS software for the preservation of digital cultural heritage materials. The MetaArchive Cooperative was born in 2004 - thus, we at UofL had a digital preservation solution before we had a digital initiatives department! We're now dues-paying Sustaining Members of the Cooperative, and that makes us NDSA members as well.

Other ways we've tried to innovate on the cheap include using Omeka for digital exhibits (including in partnership with the Public History department's Digital History course); crowdsourcing the transcription of a historic local African-American newspaper using the Scripto plugin with Omeka; offering to publish open access e-journals and conference proceedings through the Public Knowledge Project's Open Journal Systems and Open Conference Systems; experimenting with mapping our content using Google Maps, Historypin, and Viewshare; and using the Internet Archive for monographs and its Archive-It service for a small web archiving project. (See <http://louisville.edu/library/archives/digital> for links)

At the beginning of this year, Digital Initiatives, University Archives and Records Center (founded in 1973), Rare Books (founded in 1957), and Photographic Archives (founded in 1962) merged to form a new library, Archives and Special Collections (<http://louisville.edu/library/archives/>), with a single service point and uniform policies, which, after the dust settles, will help me streamline digital initiatives and digital preservation.